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The Campaign and Battles of Gettysburg.

ADDRESS

OF

MAJOR JOHN W. DANIEL,

(Formerly Asst. Adjt. Gen'l C. S. A. on the Staff of Gen. Jubal A. Early,)

OF LYNCHBURG, VA.,

BEFORE THE

VIRGINIA DIVISION OF THE ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,

At their Annual Meeting, held in the Capitol in Richmond, Va., Oct. 28th, 1875.

"One of those few battles of which the contrary event would have essentially varied the drama of the world in all its subsequent scenes."—HALLAM.

"Stop! for thy tread is on an Empire's dust,
An Earthquake's spoil is sepulchred below.
Is the spot mark'd by no collossal bust?
Nor column trophied for triumphal show?
None: but the moral's truth tells simpler so,
As the ground was before, thus let it be:—
Now that red rain hath made the harvest grow."

CHILDE HAROLD.

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General W. H. F. LEE,
President.

George L. Christian,
Leroy S. Edwards,
Secretaries.

ADDRESS.

Fellow Soldiers of the Army of Northern Virginia :

Not with the ringing bugle nor the throbbing drum in our van, nor with the battle-flag floating proudly o'er our "tattered uniforms and bright muskets," come we again to the historic city which was once the busy arsenal and the glowing heart of the Confederate revolution.

Stately palaces now line the avenues so lately filled with charred and smoking ruins. The fields around us smile in cultivated beauty where lately trod the iron hoof of war "fetlock deep in blood." The lordly river, no longer grim with batteries on its banks, and iron-clads upon its surface, nor choked with obstructions in its channel, rolls its majestic tides in unbroken currents to the sea. And save here and there, where some rude earthwork, overgrown with grass and weeds, scars the landscape, fair nature tells no tale of the devastation of civil strife.

But long after the elements of changing seasons, and the slow process of time, have obliterated from the physical world every scar and stain of conflict, the scenes around us, animate with their heroic actors, shall be portrayed to other generations with all the vividness of artist's brush and poet's song; and faithful chroniclers shall recount to eager ears the story, which has made the name of Richmond not less memorable than the name of ancient Troy, and has immortalized those more than Trojan heroes, the devoted citizen-soldiery of the Army of Northern Virginia.

Surviving comrades of that valiant host, I hail you with a comrade's warmest greeting. In Virginia's name I welcome you back to Virginia's capital city, amongst those generous

people who nerved your arms by their cheerful courage, who bent over your wounds with ministering care, who consoled adversity by fidelity, and plucked from defeat its sting.

Here to-night we come as men of peace—faithfully rendering unto Cæsar the things that are his—but happy to touch elbows once more together in the battle of life, and proud to revive the cherished memories of the "brave days of yore" and to renew the solemn and high resolve that their bright examples and great actions shall not perish from the records of time.

Happier, indeed, would I have been if, on this occasion, the task of reproducing some page of your famous history had been confided to other and abler hands than mine; for in this distinguished presence, with my superiors in rank, ability and military services around me, the soldiers's sense of subordination creeps over me, and I would fain fall back into the ranks of those who are seen but not heard.

But since it is I who am appointed to play the *role* of the old soldier

> "Who shoulders his crutch
> And shows how fields were won"

I bow obediently to orders, trusting that the splendor of my themes may obscure the deficiencies of your orator, and that your generosity—as characteristic of the soldier as his courage—may sheathe the critic's sword in its scabbard.

THEME SUGGESTED.

In their courteous letter of invitation your committee expressed the desire that I should select as the subject of my discourse some one of the great campaigns or battles of the Army of Northern Virginia. And, acceding to their wishes, I reviewed in my mind the long line of its splendid achievements, no little embarrassed, by their very variety and brilliancy, in fixing attention upon any particular one. There was no campaign of that matchless army that did not abound in glorious exploits of both generals and soldiers. There

was no single action, whatever its result, that draped the battle-flag in dishonor, and it is a significant fact—an eternal eulogy in itself to that stout-hearted band of heroes—that it was never driven in disorder from any field of battle under its enemy's fire, until when, worn out by ceaseless strife with constant levies of fresh men, it was overwhelmed by Grant at Petersburg, and closed its career with undiminished glory on the field of Appomattox.

INDECISIVENESS OF THE VIRGINIA BATTLES.

But there is this equally remarkable fact in the history of the Army of Northern Virginia—that almost all of its engagements were attended by no decisive results. The capitals of the two belligerent nations (Washington and Richmond) were but one hundred and thirty miles distant, and that portion of Virginia lying between them became an immense ampitheatre of conflict, within which the armies of the Potomac and of Northern Virginia, like fierce gladiators, repeated from year to year their bloody contests, with fortunes varying only sufficiently to brighten hope or beget depression, but continually postponing the glittering prize which each aimed to attain.

To and fro—from the heights around Alexandria, whence the soaring dome of the national capital loomed up before the Confederate's vision, back to these memorable fields around Richmond, whence the Federal pickets sighted its tempting spires—rolled the incessant tides of battle, with alternations of success, until all Northern Virginia became upheaved with entrenchments, billowed with graves, saturated with blood, seared with fire, stripped to desolation, and kneaded under the feet, hoofs, and wheels of the marching columns.

At the first battle of Manassas the cordon of fortifications around Washington prevented a rout from becoming an annihilation, and that battle only decided that other battles would be needed to decide anything.

At Williamsburg McClellan, who succeeded McDowell, the displaced commander of Manassas, received a sharp rebuff, which decided nothing but that the antagonists would have to close together.

At Seven Pines the fall of our skillful General Joseph E. Johnston, at a critical moment, and the consequent delay which enabled Sedgwick to cross the swollen waters of the Chickahominy, ended the prospect of making that more than a field of gallant and brilliant endeavor.

At Malvern Hill a curious mistake, which led one subordinate to pursue a wrong road, and the lamentable delay of others, combined with the really valorous defence of that key-position, extinguished the high tide of victory in the volcanic fires of that battery-crowned summit, and closed with the escape of the enemy to his gunboats and the disappointment of his adversary.

The second field of Manassas, in which the redoubtable John Pope, [illegible] having seen before "only the backs of his enemies," entered the fact of record that his curiosity was entirely satiated with a single glimpse of their faces, was only the prelude of a more deadly struggle at Sharpsburg; and as Manassas only decided that it would require another effort of the Federal army to beat us on our own soil, Sharpsburg only decided that we would have to gird our loins once more to overwhelm it upon its own.

At Fredericksburg in December, 1862, Burnside, having blindly hurled his army against Lee's entrenchments, managed to repeat the manœuvre of French King, who "marched up the hill and down again"—and to regain the opposite bank of the Rappahannock without a foot of ground lost or won—leaving that ill-starred field behind him as a memorial of nothing but wasted life and courage on the one side, and cool, steady, self-poised intrepidity on the other.

And at Chancellorsville, in the spring of 1863, when Hooker assailed by flank the same field which Burnside

charged in front, a famous stroke of generalship, directed by Lee and executed by Jackson, placed him side by side on the stool of penitence with his predecessor. But there a great calamity planted a thorn in the crown of victory, gave pause to the advance of the conquering banner, and turned to safe retreat what promised to be the rout and annihilation of the Federal army. That calamity was the fall of "Stonewall" Jackson, Lee's incomparable lieutenant, whose genius had shed undying lustre on the Confederate arms, and before whose effigy to-day the two worlds bow in honor.

And so the end of two years found the two armies still pitted against each other in the same arena, with proud Washington behind the one still egging it to the attack for the honor of the old flag and the solidarity of the Union; and defiant Richmond still behind the other, upholding it with words and deeds of cheer, and bidding it never to weary in well doing for the cause of liberty and Confederate independence.

THE CRISIS OF 1863.

But while the status of the combatants in Virginia had received no decisive change, it became obvious in the spring of 1863 that an hour big with destiny was near at hand. The Army of the Potomac had become disheartened by continuous adversity. Five chosen chieftans—McDowell, McClellan, Pope, Burnside, Hooker—had led it to battle in superb array; but its ranks had only been recruited to march again to defeat and decimation. The term of enlistment of nearly 40,000 of its rank and file had now expired,* and as they marched to the rear, homeward bound, no counter column was moving to supply their vacant places. With the northern people, hope of victory deferred, had made the heart sick of strife, and the "Copper-head" faction, like the Republicans of Paris when Napoleon was marching against the allied armies of Waterloo, was agitating schemes against

*See Vol. I, Conduct of the War.

the government and the prolongation of the war. The paper currency, like a thermometer on the stock exchange, showed that the pulse of the popular faith was beating low. Factory hands, without cotton to spin, cried for bread, and were not content to take muskets and go to the feast of blood. Foreign powers had lost confidence in Mr. Seward's three-months' promissory notes of victory, which had been so often renewed and had now gone to protest; and it is said that our diplomatic agents abroad authoritatively announced, that should Lee establish now a lodgment in the North, his triumph should be greeted with the long-sought boon of foreign recognition.

On the Confederate side our line of battle, although in the east unbroken, was but an iron shell with emptiness within. Hungry mobs had been rioting through Richmond with the fearful cry of "Bread!" "Bread!" The plantations had not only been swept of their provender, but the tillers of the soil and their beasts of burden had likewise been absorbed into the ranks of war. And to increase the gravity of the situation our western horizon was overhung with omens of disaster. There the progress of the Union arms had been steadily forward. Missouri, Kentucky, and parts of Tennessee and Arkansas had been conquered. Along the Mississippi river, Columbus, Island No. 10, Fort Pillow, Memphis, and New Orleans had fallen; and now Vicksburg, a solitary sentinel upon its banks, alone prevented the Father of Waters from "rolling unvexed to the sea."

This post, like a ligature upon an artery, severed the Federal line of military communication from the Northwest to the Gulf of Mexico, and isolated the Western States from their markets. Its early conquest was foreshadowed, and with that the northern heart would be again fired with hope and a blow struck into the very vitals of the Confederacy.

THE PROJECT OF INVASION.

Could the hitherto invincible Army of Northern Virginia

now launch forth a telling blow against its adversary, and anticipate the bursting of the storm cloud in the West by a sunburst of decisive victory in the East, disaster there would be counterbalanced, if not forestalled and prevented. The peace party of the North would be reinforced in numbers and strengthened in resolution; recruits would be deterred from enrolling under the blighted banners of defeat; the bonds and Treasury notes of the United States would rapidly decline in value, thus relaxing the sinews of war; and foreign powers, hungry for cotton, and weary of idle factories and freightless ships and marketless wares, would stretch forth the hand of recognition, and welcome the young battle-crowned Confederacy into the family of nations. The broad military mind of General Lee fully compassed the crisis, and he boldly projected the scheme of forcing Hooker from his position opposite to Fredericksburg, expelling Milroy from the Valley, and, to use his language, "transferring the scene of hostilities beyond the Potomac."

THE SEQUEL AT GETTYSBURG.

The sequel of this plan of operations was the battle of Gettysburg, fought in the heart of the enemy's country. There for three days the two armies wrestled over hill and plain in terrific struggle. There, on the third day, the most magnificent charge of infantry known in the annals of modern war, closed with the bloody repulse of the Confederate assaulting column.

And while Lee was marshalling his troops in front of Cemetery Ridge, the white flag was flying over Pemberton's works at Vicksburg.

Those memorable days marked the meridian of the Confederate cause. It was not then extinguished, but its sun paled, and descended slowly to its setting.

As the water-shed of the Alleghanies is the division-line between the waters which flow eastward into the Atlantic ocean and those which empty into the Gulf through the

Mississippi Valley, so Cemetery Ridge marks the turning point of the tides of battle. Up to that rugged crest they rolled in triumph, pouring the trophies of victory into the lap of the Confederacy. Beyond they rolled in sullen and gloomy turbulence toward the final catastrophe of Appomattox.

These considerations induced me, Comrades, to invite your attention to the campaign of Gettysburg.

I know it requires no little courage to fight a battle "o'er again"—but those whose valor deserved success need never shrink from the memory of adversity.

PRELIMINARY MOVEMENTS IN VIRGINIA.

On June 3, 1863, General Lee broke his camp before Fredericksburg; and leaving Hill's corps to watch Hooker's army, which was separated from it only by the Rappahannock river, turned the heads of Longstreet's and Ewell's corps northward. His design was to draw Hooker out into the open field and defeat him before crossing the Potomac. But in this he was disappointed, not so much by the skill of his adversary as by the absence of harmony in his councils.

Hooker's plan was to cross the Rappahannock, fall upon Hill with his whole army, and then make a bold push for Richmond. Had he made this effort Lee intended to take him in flank; and the result I scarcely think would have been doubtful. But Mr. Lincoln positively forbade Hooker to make this attempt, quaintly saying that he (Hooker) would thus become "entangled upon the river like an ox jumped half over a fence, and liable to be torn by dogs front and rear without a fair chance to gore one way or kick the other." On the contrary, Lincoln desired Hooker to attack Lee's army while stretched out on the line of march; and on the 14th of June, the very day that our vanguard struck Milroy at Winchester, we find him sending Hooker another characteristic message from Washington:

"*Major-General Hooker:* So far as we can make out here the enemy have Milroy surrounded at Winchester and Tyler at Martinsburg. If they could hold out a few days could you help them? If the *head* of Lee's army is at Martinsburg and the *tail* of it on the plank road between Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville the animal must be very slim somewhere.*

A. LINCOLN."

So it happened that Lincoln, not liking Hooker's plan, nor Hooker Lincoln's (which was concurred in by Halleck, commander-in-chief at Washington,) neither was adopted. And Hooker contented himself (after sending a corps south of the Rappahannock and then withdrawing it,) with falling back to the vicinity of Fairfax Court-house and closely hugging his entrenchments.

In these preliminary movements all the advantage in generalship and in results was on the Confederate side. Hooker has been much complimented for supposed skill in his manœuvres, but they were the result of his quarrel with Lincoln, and not of design; and the reports show that he was in a state of great perplexity and indecision, on one day dispatching to the Government his opinion that invasion was Lee's "settled purpose" and "an act of desperation,"† and two days later suggesting that the movement was a mere cavalry raid, "a cover to Lee's reinforcing Bragg or moving troops to the West."‡

LEE'S MARCH TO PENNSYLVANIA.

While Hooker thus crouched under his heavy works, Lee marched triumphantly toward the Potomac; and on the 14th of June the first laurel of the campaign was plucked by Ewell at Winchester, where a billiant flank movement, conceived by General Early and executed by his division, with

*See Vol. I, Conduct of the War—p. 260.

†See Vol. I, Conduct of the War—p. 161.

‡See same Work—p. 271.

the co-operation of Johnson's, resulted in the capture of that place with four thousand prisoners, twenty-three pieces of artillery, three hundred wagons, three hundred horses, and an immense supply of much-needed stores and munitions.

On the same day General Rodes captured at Martinsburg one hundred prisoners and five pieces of cannon; and thus the great northern highway, "the Valley pike," was cleared of all obstructions and the gate to Pennsylvania thrown open.

On the 15th of June General Jenkins with his cavalry crossed the Potomac. Within the next ten days the three infantry corps of our army, under Longstreet, Ewell, and A. P. Hill, likewise crossed, and on the 24th of June the whole Army of Northern Virginia, in magnificent fighting trim, and flush with victory, stood upon the enemy's soil.

THE MOVEMENTS OF THE CAVALRY.

While these movements were progressing, the cavalry under Stuart had several times crossed sabres with the troopers of Pleasanton, without detriment to their own repu tation or that of their General. And in leaving Virginia with his main force, General Lee had taken every precaution to utilize these "eyes and ears" of the army by sending them to watch and impede Hooker's movements. His orders to General Stuart were "to guard the passes of the mountains and observe the movements of the enemy, whom he was instructed to harass and impede as much as possible should he attempt to cross the Potomac. In that event General Stuart was directed to move into Maryland, crossing the Potomac east or west of the Blue Ridge, as in his judgment should be best, and take position on the right of our column as it advanced." (Lee's first report.)

In operating under these instructions an untoward circumstance occurred which eliminated the cavalry from the available forces of Lee, at a time when he most needed it. Stuart had followed closely upon the rear of Hooker in Fairfax and

Loudoun counties, when, upon the 24th of June, the latter determined to fall back no further, and suddenly threw his army forward into Maryland to seize the Turner's and Crampton's gaps of South Mountains, near Boonsboro, which covered the line of advance from Lee's army to Baltimore through Frederick, Maryland.*

The effect, though not the design, of this movement was to throw Hooker between Stuart and Lee, and as the former was crossing the Potomac at Edward's Ferry, near Leesburg, it became necessary for Stuart to make a wide detour south in order to cross above him, or to cut in between Hooker and Washington, and pass northward, in order to re-join his Commander. Acting within the discretion given him, (and not otherwise as some have supposed), Stuart adopted the latter route as the shortest, crossing at Seneca Falls.†

But unfortunately Hooker continued his march northward, continuously interposing himself before Stuart; and thus, when he had advanced so far as to be right upon the flank of Lee's only line of retreat to Virginia, the latter, who had distributed his forces near Chambersburg, Carlisle, and York, was utterly ignorant of the enemy's movements, and receiving no message from Stuart supposed that Hooker still remained on the Virginia side of the Potomac.

LEE'S CONCENTRATION FOR BATTLE.

On the night of June 28th, (not the 29th, as stated in Lee's first report,) a cavalry scout of General Longstreet's rode into that officer's headquarters, near Chambersburg, with the momentous tidings that the Army of the Potomac had crossed the river and was then gathering near Frederick, Maryland. Hooker was thus in position to seize the South Mountain passes and cut off Lee's communications. General Lee was at the time about to push forward and capture Har-

*See Vol. I, Conduct of the War—p. 169.

†See General Lee's Second Report in Southern Magazine for Aug., 1872, p. 210.

risburg, the capital of Pennsylvania, scarce a day's march distant, which, being defended by militia mainly, under General Couch, could not have withstood the assault of our veteran troops. But with Hooker thus on his flank and rear, the continuance of the scheme became hazardous, and he determined at once to concentrate his army east of the mountains, thus threatening Baltimore and Washington, and in order to deter the enemy, to use his langnage, "from advancing further west and intercepting our communications with Virginia." Accordingly the movement against Harrisburg was abandoned, and the next day General Lee issued orders for the concentration of all his troops at Cashtown, a village five miles from Gettysburg, and on the direct road which passes through that place to Baltimore.

HOOKER'S PLAN.

The report of Longstreet's scout was true, and Lee had keenly divined his enemy's intentions; for Hooker had moved forward into Maryland and had given directions to General Reynolds, who commanded the right wing of the army, to seize the mountain passes which have been mentioned, and to take position at Middletown, in rear of them, in the valley between the South Mountain and the Cotoctin range. At the same time he had himself gone to Harper's Ferry, whence he proposed to move with the Twelfth corps and the garrison there of 11,000 men directly upon Williamsport, thus severing Lee's line of communication to Virginia, and stopping the transit of supplies which he was sending back in immense quantities from Pennsylvania.

On the morning of the 27th of June he had seated himself and was engaged in writing an order for the abandonment of that post at daylight, with a view to proceeding with this plan of operations. But just at that moment a dispatch was received from General Halleck requiring the garrison to remain there. The latter officer, whose self-conceit was only equalled by his incapacity, excited the in-

dignation of Hooker by thus trammelling him, while in the face of Lee's army, with instructions full of folly; for Harper's Ferry at this juncture was a stragetic point of no earthly consequence; and rather than submit to such interference he at once requested to be relived of command of the Army of the Potomac. His request was at once granted.

GENERAL MEADE.

On the night of the same day Major-General G. C. Meade, commanding the Fifth corps of the Army of the Potomac, was asleep in his tent near Frederick, Md., when he was aroused by General Hardie, a bearer of dispatches from Washington. Meade, who had severely criticised Hooker for his alleged incapacity at Chancellorsville, supposed that he was about to be placed under arrest by that officer, who had threatened to do so, and he immediately inquired of General Hardie if he came for that purpose. The latter, evading the question, struck a light and placed in his hand an order directing him to assume command of the Army of the Potomac, "and committing to him all the powers of the Executive and the Constitution, to the end that he might wield untrammelled all the resources of the nation to meet the emergency of the invasion."

On the next day, June 28, while yet Lee was threatening Harrisburg, Meade assumed command; and on the 29th, ignorant that Lee had abandoned that movement, he determined to move at once from the vicinity of Frederick toward Harrisburg, to compel Lee (to use Meade's language) "to loose his hold on the Susquehannah and meet him in battle at some point." Accordingly, on the very day that Lee's columns moved eastward toward Baltimore, in order to counteract a supposed manœuvre upon his communications, Meade, equally ignorant of his antagonist's change of front, moved northward to stay a supposed advance upon Harrisburg. And adding to these complications, Stuart, who had swept around Meade's flank, was at the same time moving

toward Carlisle, he himself being as ignorant of Lee's intentions as Meade, and supposing that he would find his commander upon the line of the Susquehannah. Now, right in the line of Meade's northward march, and of Lee's eastward march, lies the old-fashioned town of Gettysburg, and to that point the two hostile forces were now converging, each in utter darkness as to the other's movements, and little imagining that that sequestered hamlet was destined to become the scene of a tremendous struggle, which would make its name resound throughout the ages as memorable as that of Waterloo.

THE 30TH OF JUNE.

The 30th of June was a day of busy preparation. On that day the new commander of the Federal Army issued his orders of march, directing the seven corps of which his forces were composed, to move as follows: The Third to Emmettsburg, Second to Taneytown, Fifth to Hanover, Twelfth to Two Taverns, Sixth to Manchester, while the First and Eleventh, constituting, with the Third, the right wing, under Reynolds, were to proceed with Buford's cavalry division to Gettysburg. That same morning, Pettigrew's brigade, of Heth's division, Hill's corps, which had been ordered to Gettysburg to procure shoes and supplies, approached that place on the Cashtown road, and its head of column had reached the crest of Seminary Ridge within easy cannon-shot of the town, when at the same time the advance of Buford's cavalry reached the town from the opposite direction.* The Confederate brigade retired to Cashtown, some five miles distant, and, Buford occupying the place, established his division in front, along or near the line of Willoughby run, covering the approaches to it by the Chambersburg, Mummasburg, Carlisle, and Harrisburg roads. General Reynolds, with the First and Eleventh corps, came at the same time to within a few miles of Gettysburg, on the Emmettsburg road, and halted for the night. That even-

*Gen. H. Heth confirms this statement.

ing Meade became satisfied, from tidings received, that Lee was moving towards Gettysburg; but neither he nor General Lee seem to have had any knowledge of the great strategic consequence of that place; and the latter, still without report from his cavalry, fitly termed the "eyes of the army," was groping like a blind Titan for his enemy, unconscious that Meade's advance columns were within a few hours march of his own.

Such is war—a game of skill and chance—a game of chess, and "blind man's buff" compounded together.

THE FIRST DAY OF JULY.

With the dawn of July 1st, Heth's and Pender's division, of Hill's corps, sallied forth from Cashtown to reconnoitre and assail the force seen by Pettigrew the day before; and at the same time Rodes' and Early's divisions started for Cashtown from Heidlersburg, where they had rested the preceding night. Longstreet's corps slowly brought up Lee's rear from Chambersburg, and Johnson's division was yet over the mountains near Greencastle and Scotland, with Ewell's reserve artillery. A little before 10 o'clock Hill's advance came up with Buford's cavalrymen, who were dismounted and posted as infantry; and a skirmish commenced which swelled into a combat—a combat which swelled into the greatest battle ever fought on this continent—for there, unconsciously to all, the battle of Gettysburg began. Hill advanced cautiously, supposing that he fought infantry, and for two hours there were sharp passages between the contestants without important results.

From the steeple of the Theological Seminary, which gives name to the ridge in front of which Buford's troops were in line, the signal officer of that general at this moment discerned in the distance the corps headquarters flag of Reynolds, and Buford himself, sighting the telescope, recognized that succor was coming, and exclaimed "We can now hold the place." In a few moments Reynolds himself dashed up,

and swiftly after him the First corps, under Doubleday, came pouring across the fields, and in a short time a desperate engagement was raging along the line. Reynolds at once dispatched for the Eleventh corps, of Howard, and the Third, of Sickles', which were a few miles away, to hasten to the field. But while they were being summoned to the rescue the intonations of cannon had reached the ears of Ewell, Rodes and Early. No other than these "sightless couriers of the air" needed they, and, turning off from the Cashtown road, those gallant soldiers pushed on their columns toward the booming of the guns. Howard's leading brigades had scarcely strengthened the lines of Doubleday, when Rodes came thundering upon his front, and until two o'clock the contending forces charged and countercharged, each fighting with an ardor worthy of the great stake that was trembling in the balance.

THE ADVANCE OF EARLY.

If you will look at the map you will perceive that the Union line of battle, parallel with Seminary Ridge, ran almost due north and south. The road from Heidlersburg to Gettysburg strikes this position right on the rear of the right flank, and on this road Early's veterans—their steps quickened by every note of the guns—were pressing on, with all the celerity which had earned some of them under Jackson the *soubriquet* of the "foot-cavalry of the Valley."

It was about 2 o'clock. General Early rode at the division head with his staff. A heavy mist was falling, and the hot sun of July subdued by its refreshing moisture. As we neared the scene of conflict a few cavalry pickets scampered off. When reaching an eminence about a mile from the town at once the glorious panorama of battle was spread before our eyes; and indeed it was

> "A glorious sight to see
> To him who had no friend, no brother there."

Aye! more glorious still to those whose friends and broth-

ers *were there*—making the field radiant with deeds worthy of old Sparta's time, when there were giants upon the earth.

Just in front, nestling on the slope of Cemetery Hill, lay Gettysburg. Fields, rich with the summer harvests, and dotted with cosy, rustic homes, stretched forth in our front, while on the right of the town, scarce a mile distant, wreathed in the smoke of batteries and battalions, could be distinctly seen the long lines of Confederate gray and Union blue, now rushing to the charge, now pouring volleys into each other's bosoms, now commingled in undistinguishable *melee*, while ever and anon there rose over the sullen roar of musketry and cannon the mechanical "Hip, hip! hurrah!" of the Federal infantry, or soared aloft that sound once heard never to be forgotten, the clear, sonorous, hearty, soul-stirring ring of the Confederate cheer. General Early saw with a glance that he was right on the Federal flank, and that a charge with his division would settle the fortunes of the day. "Tell Gordon, Hays, Avery, and Smith to double-quick to the front," said he, "and open the lines of infantry for the artillery to pass." Scarce said but done. Colonel Hilary P. Jones, with his batteries came thundering to the front with his horses at a run; and with their men at a double-quick, Gordon, Hays, and Avery, (commanding Hoke's brigade,) deployed right and left, while gallant old "Extra Billy" Smith formed in reserve. As Jones's guns were getting into position, a battery at the gallop took post in front, and General Howard, whose corps was on the Federal right, stretched it out and bent it around to head off this portentous movement. Midway between us and the town flowed a little creek with rugged wooded banks, and as our troops were double-quicking forward into line, Barlow's division was forming behind this stream to meet them. Riding behind Gordon's brigade, we heard the ringing voice of the gallant Georgian as he shouted, "Forward, Georgians." And steadily forward across the yellow wheat-fields we saw the line of Georgians, Louisianians, and Carolinians roll, their burnished bayonets

making a silver wave across a cloth of gold. Now they disappear in the copse of woods along the stream; then comes the wild cheer, and the crashing volley, and a cloud of smoke wraps the combatants; a moment more and the open fields beyond were filled with the heavy, disordered masses of Howard's corps flying in wild confusion. The slaughter was terrific. In front of Gordon, where Barlow was aligned, lay a line of wounded and dead men who had fallen as they stood; and in their midst lay Barlow himself solely stricken. Not Dessaix at Marengo, nor Blucher at Waterloo, struck a more decisive blow. The Federal flank had been shrivelled up as a scroll, and the whole force gave way. On all sides, pouring up the slopes into Gettysburg, fled the broken host, while closely at their heels followed Hill and Rodes on the one side and Early on the other. At this time a band of Rodes's division struck up a soul-stirring strain, and with triumphant music chiming in with the sharp rattle of the pursuing muskets, the Confederates drove their beaten enemy into and through the streets of the captured town.

IN GETTYSBURG.

Reaching the town, the joyous veterans of the Second corps exclaimed, as their officers passed along their lines, "let us go on!" General Early, the first officer of his rank to reach the place, at once sought General Ewell to urge "an immediate advance upon the enemy before he could recover from his evident dismay," but before he could be found a report came from General (better known as "Extra Billy") Smith, that a heavy column of infantry, artillery, and cavalry was marching upon our left flank on the York road. Gordon's brigade had to be detached to go to the threatened point, and this for a time diverted attention from the pursuit. General Early not finding Ewell, sent a messenger to General A. P. Hill urging that an immediate advance be made upon the enemy, who had fallen back to the heights beyond the town.

In the mean time General Ewell came up, and he at once resolved to seize a wooded height called Culp's Hill, which commanded the enemy's position on the left, as soon as Johnson's division, yet absent, should arrive.

Between 5 and 6 o'clock in the afternoon a "rough-and ready" looking soldier, bronze-faced, with a heavy staff in his hand, which looked as combative as an Irishman's shillelah, rode up to our lines, and behind him covered with the stains of a rapid march, came streaming along, with faces eager for the fray, the famous soldiers of the old Stonewall division, now under General Edward Johnson—"old Alleghany" as they loved to call him—who looked as he rode with his heavy club at their head as if he could thrash out an army himself with that ponderous weapon.

Now, thought our gallant men, who were chafing to be unleashed, we shall go on; now, thought all, the tide has come which "taken at its flood leads on to fortune;" but in the mean time the enemy sent forward a line of infantry and occupied the hill which Ewell designed to seize. Our artillery, from the nature of the field, could not be served to advantage, and the report was revived that a column was moving upon our left flank. This report was utterly groundless, but before it could be sifted, and Johnson's division gotten into position, darkness had thrown its protecting wings over the shattered Federal lines. And so the tide went by.

SHOULD WE HAVE PRESSED ON?

It has been the almost universal sentiment of soldiers and civilians that a great blunder was made in not pressing on after the enemy when he was driven through Gettysburg, and Generals Ewell and Lee have both been sharply criticised for halting. "Never," says Mr. Swinton, one of the best war-writers, "was pause at the door of victory more fatal to the hopes of a commander." *

* See Swinton's Decisive Battles, p. 332.

It is true there existed many temptations to press the pursuit. We had met the enemy for the first time on the soil of a northern State, and disastrously routed two corps of his army, with a loss to them of two cannon and nearly five thousand prisoners,* and how shattered their remnants must have been is evidenced by the fact that the Eleventh corps, which mustered 7,400 muskets that morning, could scarcely count half that number that night; while the First was reduced from 8,200 to 2,450—scarcely a fourth being left. But General Lee's situation was a peculiar one. The cavalry was absent, and he had no information of the whereabouts or numbers of his adversary. The prisoners stated that Meade with his main force was rapidly approaching Gettysburg, and some of our own officers reported that heavy columns were threatening our left flank. Besides we had suffered severe losses. Under these circumstances, says General Lee in his report, "without information as to its (Meade's army's) proximity, the strong position which the enemy had assumed could not be attacked without danger of exposing the four divisions present, already weakened and exhausted by a long and bloody struggle, to overwhelming numbers of fresh troops,"† and so it was determined to await the arrival of Longstreet.

Now, it happens that General Lee's speculations were entirely verified, and it is very doubtful indeed whether, if accurate information had been possessed as to the enemy's situation, a renewal of the attack would have been prudent. It is disclosed in the Federal reports of this campaign that when General Howard on that morning had marched to the relief of Reynolds, he had done (what Napoleon said a good general ought always to do in going into battle) provided against exactly what followed—a disastrous defeat.

Noticing that Cemetery Hill, just in rear of Gettysburg,

*See Swinton's Decisive Battles, p. 331.

†See Lee's Second Report.

was a position of commanding importance, he had posted there one of his divisions, cammanded by General Alexander von Steinwerh, an accomplished officer, who had been schooled in the Prussian service. That officer had planted his artilery along the crest of that hill, and around its base were low stone walls rising tier above tier, behind which he had posted his infantry. While the battle was raging in front he had thrown up lunettes around each gun, and according to the northern historian of Gettysburg, "they were not mere heaps of stubble and turf, but solid works of such height and thickness as to defy the most powerful bolts which the enemy (Confederates) could throw against him, with smooth and level platforms on which the guns could be worked."* Besides this fresh division, Buford's dismounted cavalry division had retired in good order to the crest of this hill, and when the two infantry corps were driven back upon Cemetery Hill they came, to use the same writer's language, "into the folds of an impregnable fortress."†

Now, in the light of these events, bold is he who assumes to be the censor. Had Ewell hurled his two divisions against this natural fortress—now doubly fortified with pick and spade—before Johnson came up, and been repulsed by the heavy artillery and fresh troops lying in wait, who would not have said it was rash, hot-headed, and ill-considered? Had Lee, without waiting for Longstreet, pushed on when he came up and then been beaten, who would not have said that ardor had gotten the better of his discretion? And, indeed, by the hour Lee arrived, the Twelfth corps, under Slocum, and the Third, under Sickles, had gotten within supporting distance of their comrades, and they actually reached the field between 6 and 7 o'clock.‡

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* See Bates' History of the Battle of Gettysburg, p. 76.

† Ibid, p. 80.

‡ See Bates' History, p. 181, and Everett's Oration, 4th vol. Everett's Oration and Speeches, p. 635. Birney's division of the Third corps formed on Cemetery Ridge about 5 o'clock. See General Birney's statement, 1st vol. Conduct of the War, p. 366.

On the whole, it is difficult to see that either General Lee or General Ewell is open to just criticism for not pushing on; though such is my own faith in the superb gallantry of our troops that I believe they would have annihilated the forces then in their front. But this would have been far from a decisive result, as Meade, with the great body of his army, would then have fallen back and formed a new line nearer to Washington.

A CHAPTER OF ACCIDENTS.

The conflict of July had been entirely a chapter of accidents. Commencing with the affair of Heth's division with Buford's cavalry, it had attracted reinforcements from both armies by the sound of its guns, as the mælstrom gathers into its vortex the craft that float upon the surrounding waters.

At the very hour when Buford's men were going into action an order, dated that very day, was being distributed by Meade from his headquarters, at Taneytown, fourteen miles away, among his corps commanders, announcing his intention "to withdraw his army from its present position and form line of battle, with the right resting in the neighborhood of Middleburg and the left at Manchester, the general direction being that of Pipe creek,"* (which stream is about fifteen miles from Gettysburg); and when General Reynolds rode to Buford's rescue he fell upon the field to which the guns had summoned him† with an order in his pocket to fall back from Gettysburg and Emettsburg with the First, Eleventh, and Third corps, which were under him, to Middleburg.

The tidings of the battle, borne back to Meade at Taneytown, were accompanied with the announcement that General Reynolds had fallen. Still he did not go himself to the front so slow was he to appreciate that there the great battle-

* See Conduct of the War, vol. 1, p. 353.

† Ibid, p. 354.

cloud would burst, but he sent forward General Hancock, the best of his lieutenants. That officer reached the field just as the broken columns of the First and Eleventh corps were flying for refuge to the summit of Cemetery Hill. Hancock was a fighting man of resolute gallantry and magnetic presence. He soon restored order along the lines, and, sending Wadsworth's division to Culp's Hill, checkmated the movement of Ewell to get that commanding height before him.* Having made his dispositions, he rode back to Meade, at Taneytown, and reported that the field was favorable for a general action. At ten o'clock that night Meade started forward, and reached Cemetery Hill at one o'clock, while all along behind him the roads were filled by the artillery and infantry of his army, pressing on to the stage which fate, rather than foresight, had appointed for the great drama of war.

By morning all his corps had reached within supporting distance of the field, except the Sixth, which was started from Manchester, thirty-six miles distant, the afternoon before.

On our side all the infantry but Pickett's division was up. Stuart, "the indefatigable"—Stuart, "the lion-hearted"—with Hampton and "Light-Horse" Lees, had come;—the plume that never danced so joyously as in the storm of battle—the sabre whose electric light had so often cleaved with a flash the path to victory, were ready to lead the squadrons to the onset once more. And there crowning the opposite ridges—with batteries, bayonets, and sabres,—the Army of Northern Virginia, and the Army of the Potomac—surveyed each other, marshalled in solid well-ordered array of battle.

LEE RESOLVES TO ATTACK.

"It had not been intended," says General Lee (see his first report), "to fight a general battle at such a distance from our base unless attacked by the enemy, but finding ourselves

* See General Hancock's testimony, p. 405, Conduct of the War, vol. 1.

unexpectedly confronted by the Federal army, it became a matter of difficulty to withdraw through the mountains with our large trains. At the same time the country was unfavorable for collecting supplies, while in the presence of the enemy's main body, as he was enabled to restrain our foraging parties by occupying the passes of the mountains with regular and local troops. A battle thus became, in a measure, unavoidable. Encouraged by the successful issue of the engagement of the first day, and in view of the valuable results that would ensue from the defeat of the army of General Meade, it was thought advisable to renew the attack." So the first day's fight had changed our commander's plan; and when he left a conference held with Generals Ewell, Early, and Rodes, at the close of the day, the understanding was that with the light the contest should be renewed. In planning for the assault the vigilant eye of Lee had not failed to take in the salient points of

THE FIELD OF BATTLE.

Away to the right of our line there rose up a bold promontory known as "Little Round-Top"—a bald granite spur constituting a natural fortress, and commanding from the Federal left the Cemetery Ridge, on which Meade's army was aligned—a Gibraltar to the Union general once possessed—a key-position unlocking his strength—if once in Confederate hands. About a quarter of a mile further on south rises the still bolder knob known as "Round-Top." Between Little Round-Top and Gettysburg stretches the Cemetery Ridge due north in a straight line for two miles. Just in the rear and south of the town this ridge curves like a fish-hook and projects into Cemetery Hill, which derives its name from the town grave-yard, thereon, wherein

"The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep—"

Then the ridge bends around eastward, and a rugged wooded height, with rocky face, known as Culp's Hill, guards the eastern flank.

This hill commands Cemetery Hill from the north-east, as Little Round-Top commands the ridge from the south-west.

The left wing of our army, looking due south, faced Culp's and Cemetery hills. The centre and right wings, almost at right angles with the left wing, looked eastward, facing the Cemetery Ridge.

General Lee's plan was for Ewell to attack Cemetery Hill "by way of diversion" "at dawn," to be converted into a real attack, if opportunity offered, while Longstreet was to make the main attack on the enemy's right, seize Round-Top and Little Round-Top, and turn the Federal flank.

FAILURE OF THE SECOND DAY'S PLANS—"SOME ONE HAS BLUNDERED"—WHO?

Before dawn while marshalling his troops for the assault, Ewell received orders from General Lee to wait for the sound of Longstreet's guns.* But the dawn came, and no guns heralded the action. Said Mr. Edward Everett in his oration at Gettysburg: "And here I cannot but remark on the Providential inaction of the rebel army. Had the contest been renewed by it at daylight on the 2d of July, with the First and Eleventh corps exhausted by the battle and retreat, the Third and Twelfth weary from their forced march, and the Second, Fifth, and Sixth not yet arrived, nothing but a miracle could have saved the army from a great disaster. Instead of this the day dawned, the sun rose, the cool hours of the morning passed, and a considerable part of the afternoon wore away without the slightest aggressive movement on the part of the enemy. Thus time was given for half of our forces to arrive and take their places in the lines, while the rest of the army enjoyed a much-needed half-day's repose."†

I have searched in vain all accessible sources of information for some explanatien of General Lee's failure to carry

* See General Ewell's Report.

† See vol. 4, Everett's Orations, p. 537.

out the plan resolved upon the night before,—a plan eminently sagacious in itself, and which, had it been pursued promptly at dawn, would doubtless have resulted in the disastrous overthrow of the Federal Army, so graphically indicated by Mr. Everett; for Little Round-Top, which, passing strange to say, had not been occupied by the enemy, would have fallen into our hands, and the key of victory gained without a struggle; nor was it occupied till later in the day, when our troops were moving upon it.*

The secret of that fatal delay, which, to my mind, was the great mistake or misfortune of the campaign, may perhaps be forever buried in our commander's bosom. I apprehend that the tardiness of General Longstreet's movements, and the prolonged absence of Pickett's division was the cause; but lest injustice be done to General Longstreet I forbear expressing an opinion. At any rate, the fault was not Lee's, for he was anxious to attack at dawn; he sent back orders to hasten the march of the absent troops (see his report); and some overruling reason must have stayed his hand. But, alas! the opportunity was lost forever. "Opportunity," saith the old adage, "has hair in front, behind she is bald; catch her by the forelock and a little child can hold her, but once gone, Jupiter himself cannot catch her again." And such was our experience at Gettysburg.

THE SECOND DAY'S ATTACK AND ITS RESULTS.

Finally, by 3 o'clock the preparations were made. The Union army had been formed, with Slocum's Twelfth corps and Wadsworth's division of the First holding Culp's Hill and the right flank—opposite to Johnson's division. Howard's Eleventh Corps, with Robinson's and Doubleday's divisions of the First held Cemetery Hill, opposite to Early's and Rodes's divisions. Then came Hancock's Second corps, opposite to Hill's, on Cemetery Ridge, and Sickles's Third corps, extending towards Round-Top, opposite to Longstreet.

* See vol. 1, Conduct of the War, p. 332.

Sykes's Fifth corps was in reserve, on the Federal right, and Sedgwick, who reached the field just as the battle was commencing, took place in reserve upon the left.

I should have little pleasure, even did time permit, in detailing the events of this day; for, though it abounds in bright exploits, the attack was rendered disjointed and ineffectual by strange misunderstandings—to use no harsher term.

Longstreet, with Hood's and McLaw's divisions, struck the Federal left, and came within an ace of possessing Little Round-Top, which was hastily occupied by the enemy after our lines were put in motion. As soon as this attack on the Federal right got well under way Johnson's division, with magnificent valor, rushed up the rough, rocky ledges of Culp's Hill; and Hoke's and Hays's brigades of Early's division, who took their signal of assault from Johnson's guns, charged the enemy's batteries on Cemetery Hill and planted their standards on its summit, capturing his cannon, routing two lines of infantry, and cutting the right centre of the Federal line.*

But here Wo, the while! this splendid sally was robbed of its fruits. Early was to attack when he heard Johnson's guns; Rodes, on Early's right, was to continue it when he heard Early's guns. Early's part was nobly done, and Rodes started to fulfill his part. But Rodes, it seems, had a much greater distance to traverse than Early, and for some reason, nowhere explained in Lee's or Ewell's reports (General Rodes's report I have been unable to see,) at the time when the men of Hoke's and Hays's brigades surmounted the Federal works, the gallant Rodes was just moving out to assault those in his front. Before he did so the Federal reserves were hurled upon Early, and these two thin brigades,

* Hoke's brigade was commanded in this battle (General Hoke being absent, wounded) by Colonel J. E. Avery, of the Sixth North Carolina Regiment—one of the bravest and best of the many excellent soldiers that North Carolina gave to the Confederate cause.

wasted by the charge and separated from all support, were driven from the crest by fresh troops, and the prize fell from the victorious hands which had already grasped it.

The shades of night had fallen before the battle closed, and, though everywhere the troops had borne themselves in a manner worthy of their fame, the unhappy miscarriage of Rodes's movement had prevented the consummation of Lee's well-designed plan.

But some advantages had been gained and some trophies won. On our right the Federal line had been driven back by Longstreet, some guns and standards captured, and some advanced positions carried. On our left Johnson's division had driven the enemy from his works, and had maintained an advanced footing on Culp's Hill. In Early's front the soldiers of the old North State, led by Colonel Avery—who there sealed his devotion to the Southern cause with his heart's blood—had won another wreath for the brow of Carolina; and the gallant Louisianians, led by Harry Hays, had brought down from the crest of Cemetery Hill four regimental standards, seized from the cannon's mouth, and after a fierce hand-to-hand wrestle with the infantry which defended them.

THE LOUISIANIANS.

Brave spirits of Louisiana! Now, deeper in misfortune—hence to our hearts closer, and to memory dearer. Leading one of the regiments that climbed the summit of that terrible crest was Davidson B. Penn, a native of Virginia, and now, by the voice of his people, the rightful Lieutenant-Governor of the Pelican State. Take heart, brave leader and brave people! To-night your old comrades of the Army of Northern Virginia send you fraternal greetings. No longer separated from each other by a line of fire, the hearts of the liberty-loving people of this great nation, whether they once beat under the Confederate gray or the Union blue, now beat in sympathy with your brave endeavor to restore Louisiana to

the sisterhood of States, with a government worthy of the republican name, and of the Caucasian race.

The gallant souls who met you in the shock of battle know, as well as we who cheered you on, that the stout arms which drove the bayonets through the Federal lines on that "well-foughten field" were filled with blood that can never flow in the feeble pulses of sycophants and slaves. Side by side the boys in blue and the boys in gray are coming to your rescue. Over the tumults of the polls we hear the pibroch ringing; and in 1876, when the guns are heralding the hundredth anniversary of freedom's birth, God grant that they may sound to Louisiana the dawn of its resurrection!

THE FINAL DAY.

There was this significant feature in the second day's fight: The Confederate troops had everywhere borne themselves with unsurpassed audacity and intrepidity, carrying the most difficult positions by storm; and they could well say to their countrymen, with the Athenian general, that "so far as their fate depended on them they were immortal."

They had failed, but from mistakes and misunderstandings of their superiors. This fact only increased General Lee's unbounded faith in his men, and he resolved to advance again. "The result of this day's operations," says he, "induced the belief that with proper concert of action, and with the increased support that the positions gained on the right would enable the artillery to render the assaulting columns, we should ultimately succeed, and it was accordingly determined to renew the attack."* The general plan was unchanged. Longstreet was to assail the left centre, and Ewell the extreme right.

Early in the day Johnson's division, on our left, had a prolonged struggle, and drove the enemy from a part of his entrenchments, but was unable to carry the main works on

* See Lee's Second Report.

the crest of Culp's Hill. It was designed that Longstreet should attack simultaneously with him; but the dispositions were, for some reason, so slow that Johnson had concluded his drawn combat before Longstreet was ready to begin. It was arranged now that Hood's and McLaws's divisions should guard our right flank; then, Pickett,—strengthened on his left by Heth's division, under Pettigrew, and Lane's and Scales's brigades of Pender's division, under Trimble; and on his right by Wilcox's brigade of Anderson's division,—was to constitute the assaulting column. At 7 o'clock that morning the fresh division of Pickett, which had rested the night before a few miles from the field, marched to the position from which it was to be launched upon the enemy's works, and formed in line just behind Seminary Ridge, protected from view by the swell of ground and the foliage of the oak forest that grows along its crest. From the summit of this ridge the long grim line of Cemetery Ridge, just opposite, loomed up in clear profile against the summer sky, bristling with the artillery and infantry lines of the foe; and all during the hot hours of morning and noon the men picked for the assault contemplated the frowning heights against which they were to be hurled. Green fields decked forth in all the rich garniture of fertile summer-time, here and there separated by stone walls and fences, filled the intervening space—a slope down, then a valley, and then a slope again right up to the batteries and lines charged with death in every form that lead, and iron, and steel could be wrought by the destructive genius of man.

THE CANNONADE.

Upon the crest of Seminary Ridge General Lee had planted about one hundred and twenty guns, covering the front of his storming column.* Right opposite, about ninety guns faced them, and on either flank from Cemetery Hill and

* General Meade estimates our guns then engaged at 125. See vol 1. Conduct of the War, p. 333–338. Mr. Swinton places them at 155. I have no accurate information, but think 120 about right.

Round Top other batteries, comprising two hundred more guns, were ranged to join in chorus. To prepare the way, our batteries were first to cannonade the enemy's lines, and as they closed the infantry were to move out and pierce with their bayonets the Federal left centre. At 1 o'clock a single gun broke the Sabbath-like stillness that had brooded for hours over the field, then another single gun—the preconcerted signal—and then all Seminary Ridge burst forth with flames, as over one hundred guns poured forth their iron charges upon the Federal lines. Gun answered gun, and then for two hours the two armies were wrapt in the smoke of the most tremendous cannonade that ever in the open field darkened the sky of the Western world; shells screamed, rushing through the air like devils on wings of fire; through murky, sulphurous clouds the sun glared "with blood-shot eye;" the earth itself was tremulous, as if internal commotion shook its foundations; and so rapid were the discharges of cannon, that the sound of no particular gun could be distinguished—no more than the roar of a single wave when angry ocean tosses its billows mountain-high in midwinter storm. Nor was this, as is generally the case with artillery duels, mere "sound and fury, signifying nothing." Our infantry were for the most part sheltered, but on the Federal side, says the historian of Gettysburg, "notwithstanding every precaution was taken to shelter the Union troops, the destruction was terrible. Men were torn limb from limb and blown to atoms by the villainous shells; horses were disembowelled and thrown prostrate to writhe in death agonies; caisons filled with ammunition were exploded; cannon rent; and steel-banded gun-carriages knocked into shapeless masses."*

THE CHARGE.

At the end of two hours the fire slackened,—then closed like some grand orchestral chorus announcing the curtain's

*See Bates' History of the Battle of Gettysburg, p. 154.

rise as tragedy itself steps forth upon the stage. As silence once more reigned over the smoking heights, from behind the sable curtain that still hung over Seminary Ridge, there emerged the long double lines of the Confederate infantry, in none of the "pomp and circumstance of war," but clad in sombre homespun, brown and gray, with nothing bright about them, save the blood-red battle flags twinkling in their midst, and the glittering sheen of cold steel. Old Virginia had the post of honor that day. In the centre of the assaulting line moved Pickett's men "in battle's magnificently stern array," Kemper on the right connecting with Wilcox; Garnett on the left connecting with Pettigrew; Armistead behind them—Virginians all. Down the slope from Seminary Ridge they moved forth to the assault, not impetuously, says Mr. Swinton, "at the run or double-quick, as has been represented in the over-colored descriptions in which the famous charge has been so often painted, but with a *disciplined steadiness*—a quality noticed by all who saw this advance as its characteristic feature."* Mounted on his familiar iron-gray war-horse, Traveller, General Lee, from the summit of Seminary Ridge, watched his veterans as they advanced to this supreme endeavor, as did Napoleon from the slope of La Belle Alliance watch the advance of the Old Guard upon the allied centre at Waterloo. Scarcely had they debouched into the field, before once more Cemetery Ridge, in their front, was fringed with fire, and into their faces came the hissing shot and shell. And, unfortunately for us, *our own batteries, having nearly exhausted their amunition*, (a fact unknown to General Lee when the assault commenced,) were unable to reply.†

Our left, under the noble Trimble, who was soon struck down, staggered at the start, but soon regained their step; and while shell burst overhead, and solid shot opened frightful gaps, the lines closed up and moved on. Half way over

*See Swinton's Decisive Battles, p. 343.
†See Lee's Second Report. Whose fault was this?

this death-devoured field Pickett's men paused and rearranged their lines, and then moved obliquely to the left, so as to strike "the highest point and apparent centre of the enemy."* Now, it happened that Wilcox did not close on to Pickett's right, thus leaving a gap open upon his flank; and now, at close range, the enemy from his shotted guns poured canister right into their bosoms; but still they pressed right on. And now from behind stones walls and trenches on the top plateau of Cemetery Ridge, the fire of musketry flashed into their faces. Kemper and Garnett, while leading their men like the Paladins of old, had fallen; but the men faltered not, and with a bold forward rush they clove the Federal line. Brave Armistead, leading his men afoot, sprung upon the enemy's works, while all around him clustered the resolute soldiers of the Virginia Division, who had

> "Charged an Army
> While all the world wondered."

With calm countenance, but heart elate, General Lee, from his post, with his field-glass fixed upon this point, now saw the battle-flags waving over the smoke that wreathed the crest of Cemetery Ridge, like a cluster of blood-red mountain blossoms amidst thick foilage; and for the while Pickett's men stood conquerors on this blood-won summit, while all along their front the Federal troops, dismayed by their astonishing intrepidity, fled the field, leaving their batteries in their victors' hands.

But, alas! they stood alone. For at least twenty minutes—(I am told by Capt. John Holmes Smith, of the Lynchburg Home Guard, who, though wounded, climbed that perilous height)—the few who got there held undisputed possession of the field. But where were their supports?—where were their coadjutors? Pettigrew's and Trimble's men had broken before the tornado of canister in their front,

*Major Walter Harrison in his volume, entitled Pickett's Men so states. See p. 183.

and had disappeared.* And now, upon their right, the gap left by Wilcox was being filled by Federal troops; and marshalling in their front the Federal reserves, summoned from every point to the rescue stood in masses four lines deep.

Anxiously they looked for support, but instead of succor their antagonists closed upon them front and flank, and this little wasted band could no more live, in the concentric lines of fire emptied on their devoted heads, than the child's play-boat could breast the surge of an ocean-storm.

Sword in hand, on the farthest verge of the advance, brave Armistead fell, death-stricken; and from this highest pinnacle, to which ever the waves of the Confederate war dashed their bloody spray, the surviving hand-ful of Pickett's men relaxed their hold, and sullenly turned their faces back to the Conferate lines and toward the setting sun. The sun, alas! whose waning rays lighted for the last time to many a fallen hero the scenes of earth—the sun, alas! whose waning rays seemed prophetic of the waning cause, dearer to them than light or life. And so, Virginia's spear was broken—the banner of the Confederacy was blighted—the Battle of Gettysburg was done!

THE LOSSES.

I pause to contemplate the havoc wrought in these three days of battle. We have authentic official reports that the loss on the Federal side amounted to 2,834 killed, 13,709 wounded, and 6,643 missing—in all, 23,186.†

The author of "Harper's Pictorial History of the War"—which could be more fitly termed "Harper's Pictorial Fib"—estimates our loss at 36,000 in all; and Mr. Bates, the his-

*General Trimble lost a leg in this charge. There is no reproach for him. General Heth had been wounded in the first days' fight, and was absent, and his Division, under General Pettigrew, had been decimated in the first days' fight. General Trimble had been placed in command during the engagement.

†See General Meade's Report.

torian of Gettysburg, estimates it at 27,500 wounded, 5,500 killed, and 13,621 prisoners, which would make 46,621 *—a most preposterous conclusion, worthy only of Gulliver or Munchausen.

I am enabled to state from the official reports the losses of two corps of our army. General Longstreet's losses were 933 killed, 4,453 wounded, and 2,373 missing—total, 7,659.† General Ewell's were 883 killed, 3,857 wounded, and 1,347 missing—total, 6,094.‡ Aggregate in the two corps, 13,753. It is not probable that Hill's losses exceeded Longstreet's, as he suffered less than any corps-commander on the second day. Putting them at 8,000 we would have as grand aggregate 21,753. This includes artillery and infantry; and allowing 1,000 more, which must be excessive, for cavalry and for nurses who were left with the wounded, and still our losses would be less than those of the enemy.

In Pickett's division the frightful loss attests its devoted courage. It carried into action four thousand four hundred and eighty-five muskets, about four thousand seven hundred rank and file. Its loss was two thousand eight hundred and sixty-three. Two of its brigadiers (Armistead and Garnett) were killed, and the third (Kemper) wounded, but, thank Heaven, not lost. Of fifteen regimental commanders seven were killed and eight wounded; and of its whole complement of field officers only one, the gallant Lieutenant-Colonel Joseph R. Cabell, who was afterwards killed at Drewry's farm, returned from the charge unscathed.

NUMBERS ENGAGED.

As to the numbers engaged the Federals have given us pretty thorough information as to their side. General Meade estimated his available force at 95,000 men and about 300

* See Bates' History, p. 199–200.

† See official Report in Southern Magazine for April, 1874. Appendix, p. 55.

‡ See General Ewell's Report in Southern Magazine for June, 1873, p. 695.

cannon.* Some of these guarded his trains, and many must have straggled. Discounting ten per cent. for these, he must have had in his seven army corps not less than 80,000 men upon the field.

The Federal estimates of our force are very extravagant, and some of them not a little curious. General Hooker says in his testimony before the Committee on the Conduct of the War: "With regard to the enemy's force I had reliable information. Two Union men had counted them as they passed through Hagerstown, and in order that there might be no mistake they compared notes every night, and if their counts differed they were satisfactorily adjusted by compromise. In round numbers Lee had 91,000 infantry and 280 pieces of artillery. Marching with that column were 6,000 cavalry."† He then estimates Stuart's cavalry at 5,000, and sums up his count of Lee's men as 90,000 infantry, 4,000 to 5,000 artillery, and 10,000 cavalry—in all about 104,000.

The miraculous performance of these two reliable Union men can be well appreciated when it is remembered that all of Lee's army did not pass through Hagerstown—Early's command, for one, going through Sharpsburg—and this spectacle of a commander basing a calculation on such trivial statements can only excite ridicule. I am not able to state General Lee's force, but I can contribute a few items which may serve partially toward an estimate. I hold in my hand the original tri-monthly field return of Early's division, made and signed by myself as its Adjutant-General, on the 20th of June, two days before it crossed the Potomac. The total present for duty was 514 officers and 5,124 enlisted men; aggregate, 5,638. This division was fully an average one of the army. Pickett's Division, as stated by Major Walter Harrison, its Adjutant-General, numbered on the field 4,481

* See General Meade's testimony, 1 vol. Conduct of the War, p. 337–8.
† 1 vol. Conduct of the War, p. 173.

muskets—about 4,700 rank and file. But allowing 6,000 as the general division strength, we would have 54,000 men. The cavalry could not have exceeded 7,000, nor the artillery 3,000, and allowing ten per cent. discount for straggling and train-guards, about 56,000 would represent our available strength. This, I believe, runs over the mark, but it shows how groundless are the wild speculations of the writers who have put our numbers at such high figures.

We have also some general data which show that the weight of numbers must have greatly preponderated on the Federal side. In a work entitled a "History of the Battle of Gettysburg," from the pen of Samuel P. Bates, State historian of Pennsylvania, we have a tabular statement showing the regiments of both armies. From that it appears that there were one hundred and sixty-four Confederate and two hundred and forty-one Federal regiments of infantry engaged —that is, seventy-seven regiments in excess of ours. Three hundred is a large average regiment, and allowing that as the general average, our force would be forty-nine thousand two hundred, and the Federal force seventy-two thousand three hundred—a result, I think, nearly approximating the facts. *

THE AFTER PART.

The first impulse of General Meade, when he saw Pickett's men break and fall back, was to hurl forward his whole army in counter charge against Lee. He has been severely criti-

* Mr. Bates states that Lee went into battle with 72,000 men. See his History, p. 198. This work, written in a fair and manly spirit, though not disguising strong Northern partialities, is marred by its evident worthlessness so far as computation of numbers and losses are concerned. The archives of Confederate History will ere long bring to light data from which the truth may be elucidated; and in the mean time it is to be hoped that Confederate soldiers who have means of information will carefully preserve and record their testimony on the subject. The probability is that there has been a double count of our losses in some cases; that is that those reported by our officers as wounded, and afterwards falling into the enemy's hands on the retreat, have been also reported by the Federals as captured—and thus the wounded captive counted as two men lost! In some such way alone can we account for the extravagant estimates of our losses, directly at war with our authentic official reports.

cised by many of his Generals for not doing so; but it is well for him that his "native hue of resolution" was so soon

"Sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought."

The Federal army, as well as their commander, were appalled by the amazing boldness and bravery they had beheld. They were shocked and shattered by the terrific blow received. The arm that parried the stroke had been paralyzed by it; the victor stood aghast upon the field of carnage; the hand which wielded the scythe was too weak to strike back at the rival reaper which had mowed down his own ranks like a desolating storm.

In the history of battles we generally find that a repulse like this is followed by the dismay, confusion, and flight of the defeated army. But not thus passed away the glory of the Army of Northern Virginia, nor of that great commander who, in the twinkling of an eye, saw the brimming cup of victory dashed from his lips.

On our right Hood and McLaws, in the centre Anderson, and on the left the whole corps of Ewell, stood as steady and unmoved as if they had witnessed the mimic evolutions of a holiday's review; and not only not dismayed, but eager to welcome their antagonists "with bloody hands to hospitable graves."

As the remnant of Pickett's men fell back within our lines General Lee rode to meet them. "Never mind," said he, as he urged them to re-form, "we'll talk of this afterwards; now we want all good men to rally," and to General Wilcox, who rode up, he said quietly and cheerfully: "Never mind, General, all this has been my fault, and you must help me out of it the best way you can."

As the soldiers caught sight of their beloved commander, whose serene, majestic countenance showed no trace of disappointment, they raised their hats, and, cheering, turned to their posts; and many a ragged veteran, with one arm wounded, grasped his musket in the other and stood ready

to do or die. In a short time our lines were re-arranged, and so effectually and coolly that, as said by Colonel Freemantle, a British officer, who was an eye-witness, "There was much less noise, fuss, or confusion than at an ordinary field-day." *

During the whole of the next day the whole Army of Northern Virginia stood in line of battle on Seminary Ridge, confronting in solid array the Army of the Potomac. It was rainy and chilly, and between the two hosts lay the thick-crowded victims of the battle, making the field in verity a valley of the shadow of death.

Then slowly our columns turned their faces toward Virginia, while slowly and timidly following the Army of the Potomac, hung upon our rear, willing enough to wound but yet afraid to strike. The instructions of Meade to his subordinates were by no means to bring on a general engagement; and on the night of the 13th of July, we recrossed the swollen waters of the Potomac, and stood again, in thinned ranks but unbroken spirit, upon the soil of the Old Dominion.

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS.

Thus, my comrades, I have told you in unvarnished language the story of Gettysburg.

My chief object has been to state facts, which will stand as landmarks of Confederate history, rather than to attempt mellifluous phrases which would roll away like rippling waters. And these—selected from a mass—are related only in the hope of stimulating farther researches and expositions, and not in the vain belief that they comprehend even the half of these sad but brilliant annals.

For many reasons it is important to you, and to our people, that the truth respecting this great action should be studiously explored and fully recounted. Fought at the farthermost Northern point to which our armies penetrated at any

*See Rev. John Wm. Jones' Reminiscences of General Lee.

time, it is projected into a conspicuousness which belongs to no other field. Its result increased in the North the prominence imparted to it by its geographical location; and Northern painters, sculptors, essayists, orators, and historians have exhausted the resources of art and language in picturing its actors and its scenes, and in celebrating the real, and too frequently the fictitious, exploits which the Union troops performed.

Above all, it marked a decisive turn in the fortunes of war. It was, as Mr. Swinton styles it, "the high-water mark of the rebellion." It was indeed, what the historian Hallam so finely says of the victory won by Charles Martel over the invading Saracens between Tours and Poictiers, "one of those few battles of which the contrary event would have essentially varied the drama of the world in all its subsequent scenes." For had the grand assault on Cemetery Ridge been compensated by results proportioned to the genius which directed and the courage which made it, Baltimore and Washington would have been its prizes, foreign recognition its reward, and the establishment of the Confederate States as an independent nation its final fruitage.

On the 4th day of July, 1863, while messengers were bearing back dispatches that carried unutterable grief to every Southern home, the telegraphic wires, throughout the North, were flashing with the news; bonfires and joyous bells were welcoming the tidings, that Pemberton had stacked arms before Grant at Vicksburg, and that Lee had been repulsed by Meade at Gettysburg. At once despondent hearts were elated; clamorous peace-men were silenced; distracted councils were harmonized; a divided people were united. The rich, populous, world-assisted North stood in phalanx against the thin, impoverished, and beleaguered people of the South. The policy of attrition was inaugurated, and henceforth the struggle—though radiant with all the virtues that heroism, skill, and self-sacrifice could put forth—was only a contest between the sands of the hour-glass and time.

While these causes have conspired to direct the eyes of the world to the field of Gettysburg, they have made it to us a sore subject, reviving sorrow for "the unreturning brave" who fell there, increasing the poignancy of defeat, by the contrast between the bright promise of the first day and the disastrous realizations of the third, and bringing to mind the sad refrain:

> "Of all sad words of tongue or pen,
> The saddest are these—it might have been."

Therefore its glorious annals have been neglected on our side; criticisms and censures upon gallant and worthy officers have gone unchallenged; and as yet no hand has unrolled the graphic scroll that shall tell to time the deeds which are worthy of eternity. Let no Confederate shrink before the name of Gettysburg because it was dark with disaster and bitter with disappointment.

It was the remark of Wellington that the saddest thing next to a defeat was victory. With us not less glorious than any victory was this defeat.

The gallant Frenchman blushes for Sedan and Metz the blush of shame, but with us the cheek may well glow with honest pride as we recall the fact, that on the day of our misfortunes the flame of liberty was fed with the richest libation ever poured upon her altars, and glory opened to the Confederate brotherhood who gathered around them the doors of immortality. The open fields over which the unsheltered heroes moved tell, more eloquently than the emblazoned pages of history, the tale of their devotion, and the everlasting hills of Cemetery Ridge raise aloft to Heaven the records of their everlasting fame.

And now we may apply to them the words of Pericles, pronounced in memory of the Athenians who fell in the Samian war: "They are become immortal, like the Gods, for the Gods themselves are not visible to us, but from the

honors they receive, and the happiness they enjoy, we conclude they are immortal; and such should those brave men be who die for their country."

GENERAL LEE.

Nor let the Confederate shrink before that critic who, from the serene atmosphere of his sanctum, steps forth to pluck a laurel from the reputation of that great commander who so boldly attempted what others would pale to think of. With the fall of Vicksburg imminent, General Lee felt that the hour demanded this Herculean effort. With the spirit of a Cæsar or a Napoleon he bravely cast, and bravely stood, the hazard of the die. By the very audacity of his well-aimed stroke he deserved—by the steady heroism of Pickett's men he well-nigh won—and only by a series of those curious accidents which in the game of war confound the wisdom of the wise,—did he lose,—that crowning triumph which his supreme endeavor was so well devised to win.

"It was all my fault," said he; but not such will be the verdict of the just historian, who with clear eye and steady hand, shall trace, through the tumultuous and sanguinary incidents of the day, the course of him who, after exposing his person to all the dangers of the fray, would crucify, on self-erected cross, his own illustrious name, and make that reputation, more precious than life itself, vicarious sacrifice for his lieutenants and his men.

And when the moralist shall seek the highest example of what is heroic and grand in action, and martyr-like in spirit,—that he may erect before humankind a model, that shall warm its finest fancies, and excite its highest aspirations,—he shall find it in the person of Robert E. Lee, upon the summit of Seminary Ridge, the mount of his transfiguration, where, sublimating all earthy instincts, the Divinity in his bosom shone translucent through the man, and his spirit rose up into the Godlike.

And the day shall dawn when here in the Capitol Square we shall look again upon the warrior's form and face, moulded in perennial bronze—shall see once more our great commander, mounted on Traveler, his battle steed, the seeming image of Majesty and Victory. Here in the after-time, when we too shall be sleeping under the sod with our departed comrades, our sons and daughters shall look up to that commanding presence, rejoicing to remember that their fathers fought under HIM. And here the eye of the wayfarer, the patriot, and the pilgrim shall grow brighter, as it contemplates with one glance three illustrious and congenial spirits, born to Virginia, given to humanity, world-renowned, GEORGE WASHINGTON, STONEWALL JACKSON, and ROBERT EDMUND LEE.

"O, good gray head, which all men knew;
O, voice from which their omens all men drew;
O, iron nerve, to true occasion true;
O, fall'n at length, that tower of strength
Which stood four-square to all the winds that blew.
* * * * * * * * * *
Not once or twice in our State's rough story†
The path of duty was the way to glory.
Let his great example stand
Colossal—seen of every land,
And keep the soldier firm, the statesman pure,
Till in all lands and thro' all human story
The path of duty be the way to glory.
* * * * * * * *
And let the land whose hearths he saved from shame
For many and many an age proclaim,
At civic revel and pomp and game,
And when the long-illumined cities flame,
Their ever loyal iron leader's fame,
With honor, honor, honor, honor to him—
Eternal honor to his name."

† The verbiage of this line has been slightly changed, from the text of Tennyson's noble Ode, to suit the occasion.

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